

Asthma Policy

Introduction and background

Cowley St Laurence Primary School recognises that asthma is a widespread, serious but controllable condition affecting pupils at the school. The school positively welcomes all pupils with asthma. Our school encourages pupils with asthma to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff, their employers and pupils.

Asthma medicines

Immediate access to reliever medicines is essential. Each class will have an allocated Asthma Box with individual inhalers inside. This box should be taken wherever the class is e.g. ICT room or to PE lessons and, as the pupils get older, a monitor will be allocated to take responsibility for it. Supply teachers will be informed about the class asthma box when they arrive so they know its location and related pupils. When pupils go on trips outside school, their inhalers will be taken by the adult responsible for them.

Parents are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a labelled reliever inhaler and spacer which is kept in the class Asthma box.

School staff are not required to administer asthma medicines to pupils (except in an emergency), however many of the staff at this school are happy to do this. All school staff will let pupils take their own medicines when they need to.

The welfare assistant will regularly check expiry dates of inhalers and will advise parents of the need for a replacement.

Emergency Packs

Schools should consider keeping more than one emergency asthma kit, especially if covering more than one site, to ensure that all children within the school environment are close to a kit. They must not be locked away in a cupboard or an office where access is restricted. The emergency kits are located in the Welfare Room in the KS1 building, outside the Year 1 and 2 classes and in the KS2 building on the ground floor as well as outside the Y 5 & 6 classes on the 1st floor.

An Emergency Asthma kit should contain the following:

- a Salbutamol metered dose inhaler
- at least two plastic spacers compatible with the inhaler
- instructions on using the inhaler and spacer
- instructions on cleaning and storing the inhaler
- manufacturer's information
- a checklist of inhalers, identified by their batch number and expiry date, with monthly checks recorded
- a note of the arrangements for replacing the inhaler and spacers.

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Record keeping

At the beginning of each school year or when a child joins the school, parents are asked if their child has any medical conditions including asthma on their enrolment form.

All parents of children with asthma are consequently required to provide medical evidence of their child's condition, and from this information the school keeps class medical lists, which are available to all school staff. Parents are also asked to update the school if their child's medicines or how much they take, changes during the year and provide an up to date asthma card.

The school Welfare Officer maintains an up to date Asthma register and uses this to monitor expiry dates for medication etc.

PE, games and activities

Taking part in sports, games and activities is an essential part of school life for all pupils. All teachers know which children in their class have asthma and all teachers at the school are aware of which pupils have asthma from the class medical list.

Pupils with asthma are encouraged to participate fully in all PE lessons. Pupil's inhaler should be labelled and kept at the site of the lesson. If a pupil needs to use their inhaler during a lesson they will be encouraged to do so. If pupils are frequently requiring their inhaler during physical activity, the parents will be advised to seek an asthma review with the clinic.

When a child or young person is falling behind in lessons

If a child or young person is missing a lot of time from school or is always tired because their asthma is disturbing their sleep at night, the class teacher will initially talk to the parents to work out how to prevent their child from falling behind. If appropriate, the welfare assistant will then talk to the school nurse about the pupil's needs. The school also works closely with the local hospital to inform them of pupil absence each month due to asthma and to report on inhaler usage in school.

The school recognises that it is possible for pupils with asthma to have special education needs due to their asthma.

Asthma attacks

All teaching and support staff receive training on Asthma on an annual basis. Staff who come into contact with pupils with asthma know what to do in the event of an asthma attack (see advice below).

Asthma attacks: action to take

The school follows the following procedure which is appropriately displayed in school:

- Ensure that the reliever inhaler is taken immediately
- Make sure the child is sitting upright or leaning forward slightly
- Stay calm and reassure the child
- Help the child to breathe by ensuring tight clothing is loosened

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- Repeat inhaler up to 10 puffs/repeat if necessary
- Inform parents with details of time and reliever given
- If the child is in extreme distress, call an ambulance.

Emergency procedure/Severe attacks

A severe attack is defined as:

- The inhaler has no effect after five to ten minutes;
- The child is distressed or unable to talk;
- The child is becoming exhausted;
- The child shows signs of rapid deterioration;
- There is any doubt at all about the child's condition; **Call an ambulance.**

Repeat the reliever inhaler every few minutes until help arrives. If a child is in severe distress, or experiences any loss of consciousness, call an ambulance immediately.

How to deal with an Asthma Attack

First Aid for Life™
— The First Aid Experts —

STEP 1 Sit up straight – don't lie down. Try to keep calm.

STEP 2 Take one puff of your reliever inhaler every 30 to 60 seconds up to a maximum of 10 puffs.

Have the symptoms improved immediately?

No

Yes

STEP 3 If you feel worse at any point or you don't feel better after 10 puffs, call 999 for an ambulance.

Continue to sit with the casualty until they are feeling completely well and can go back to previous activity

If the casualty is a child, parents/carers should be informed

STEP 4 Repeat step 2 after 15 minutes while you're waiting for an ambulance.

STEP 5 Even if you feel better, make an urgent same-day appointment with your GP or asthma nurse

If the casualty is a child, parents/carers should be informed

Signs of an asthma attack can include any of these

- Coughing
- Being short of breath
- Wheezy breathing
- Being unusually quiet
- Tightness in their chest - some children express this as tummy ache

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Appendix 1

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers/Governors

Employers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure the health and safety of their employees (all staff) and anyone else on the premises or taking part in school activities (this includes pupils). This responsibility extends to those staff and others leading activities taking place off site, such as visits, outings or field trips. Employers therefore have a responsibility to ensure that an appropriate asthma policy is in place
- Make sure the asthma policy is effectively monitored and regularly updated
- Report to parents, pupils, school staff and local health authorities about the successes and failures of the policy
- Provide indemnity for teachers who volunteer to administer medicine to pupils with asthma who need help

Senior Leadership Team

Senior Leadership Team have a responsibility to:

- Plan an individually tailored school asthma policy with the help of school staff, school nurses, local education authority advice and the support of their employers
- Plan the school's asthma policy in line with devolved national guidance
- Liaise between interested parties – school staff, school nurses, parents, governors, the school health service and pupils
- Ensure the plan is put into action, with good communication of the policy to everyone
- Ensure every aspect of the policy is maintained
- Assess the training and development needs of staff and arrange for them to be met
- Ensure all supply teachers and new staff know the school asthma policy
- Regularly monitor the policy and how well it is working
- Delegate a staff member to check the expiry date of spare reliever inhalers and maintain the school asthma register
- Report back to their employers and their local education authority about the school asthma policy

Welfare Officer

The Welfare Officer has the responsibility to:

- Maintain accurate asthma register and notify parents when medication is nearing its expiry date
- Ensure class asthma boxes contain the correct medication for the pupils
- Arrange annual asthma training for staff
- Liaise with the school nurse
- Maintain the Emergency Packs so that they are always ready for use.

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School staff

School staff have a responsibility to:

- Attend annual training about asthma
- Understand the school asthma policy
- Know which pupils they come into contact with have asthma
- Know what to do in an asthma attack
- Allow pupils with asthma immediate access to their reliever inhaler
- Tell parents if their child has had an asthma attack and if they used their reliever medicines
- Ensure pupils have their asthma medicines with them when they go on a school trip or out of the classroom
- Ensure pupils who have been unwell catch up on missed school work
- Be aware that a pupil may be tired because of night-time symptoms
- Keep an eye out for pupils with asthma experiencing bullying
- Liaise with parents, the school nurse and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO) or another member of staff if a child is falling behind with their work because of their asthma

PE teachers

PE teachers have a responsibility to:

- Understand asthma and the impact it can have on pupils. Pupils with asthma should not be forced to take part in activity if they feel unwell. They should also not be excluded from activities that they wish to take part in if their asthma is well controlled
- Ensure pupils have their reliever inhaler with them during activity or exercise and are allowed to take it when they need to
- If a pupil has asthma symptoms while exercising, allow them to stop, take their reliever inhaler and as soon as they feel better allow them to return to activity. (Most pupils with asthma should wait at least five minutes)
- Remind pupils with asthma whose symptoms are triggered by exercise, to use their reliever inhaler a few minutes before warming up
- Ensure pupils with asthma always warm up and down thoroughly

School nurses

School nurses have a responsibility to:

- The school nurse provides regular training for school staff in managing asthma
- Provide information about where schools can get training if they are not able to provide specialist training themselves

Parents/carers

Parents/carers have a responsibility to:

- Tell the school if their child has asthma

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- Ensure the school has a completed and up-to-date school asthma card for their child
- Inform the school about the medicines their child requires during school hours
- Inform the school of any medicines the child requires while taking part in visits, outings or field trips and other out of school hours activities such as school team sports
- Tell the school about any changes to their child's medicines. What they take and how much
- Inform the school of any changes to their child's asthma (for example, if their symptoms are getting worse or they are sleeping badly due to their asthma)
- Ensure their child's reliever inhaler that they take to school with them is labelled with his/her name
- Ensure that their child's reliever inhaler and the spare is within its expiry date
- Keep their child at home if he/she is not well enough to attend school
- Ensure their child catches up on school work missed if their child is unwell

Pupils

Pupils have a responsibility to:

- Treat other pupils with and without asthma equally
- Let any pupil having an asthma attack take their blue inhaler and ensure a member of staff is called
- Tell their parents, teacher or PE teacher when they are not feeling well if they have asthma
- Treat asthma medicines with respect
- Know how to gain access to their medicine in an emergency
- Know how to take their own asthma medicines

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